



ADVANCING OUTCOME-ORIENTED WAYS OF GBV PREVENTION PROGRAMS

AUGUST 2024

BREAKING BARRIERS

Interim Insights on the Gender-Based Violence Prevention
Evaluation Framework Pilot Phase



**The views in this report do not represent those of the Swedish Agency for International Development.*

BACKGROUND

In 2019, InterAction, with support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), initiated a two-year project to develop a results-based [Gender-Based Violence Prevention Evaluation Framework \(GBV PEF\)](#). Addressing a gap in outcome-oriented GBV prevention work, the GBV PEF serves as a practitioner-focused framework that provides organizations with specified methods and approaches to effectively measure and evaluate GBV prevention outcomes in humanitarian contexts.

The GBV PEF launched in May 2021 and comprises four modules that emphasize outcome-oriented approaches for: GBV Risk Analysis, Program Design and Theories of Change, Measurement Considerations, and Evaluation Approaches. The GBV PEF emphasizes the criticality of qualitative data collection and analysis and the use of GBV-tailored and tested methods that support the design and measurement of GBV prevention outcomes in crisis settings. The GBV-PEF is available in English, Spanish, French, and Arabic. It has been widely accessible for piloting by various organizations globally.

Developed from InterAction's [Results-Based Protection \(RBP\) framework](#)—an interagency endorsed approach to achieving protection outcomes—the GBV PEF was developed through an initial testing stage comprised of a diverse set of actors, including international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), the U.N., local NGOs, and multisectoral actors working in Afghanistan, South Sudan, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia, and Cox's Bazaar (Bangladesh). Once the Framework was launched, it entered a piloting phase that tested the GBV PEF's practicality in humanitarian contexts.

OPERATIONALIZING THE GBV PEF

Since its launch, the Danish Refugee Council, the International Committee for the Red Cross, and the Norwegian Refugee Council have committed to fully using the GBV PEF. Additionally, through the [Action-Based Research initiative](#), currently being rolled out in Somalia, Colombia, and Niger, InterAction is working with the respective Country Groups to pilot all aspects of the GBV PEF in program design, implementation, and measurement. InterAction has also facilitated a Community of Practice (CoP) with numerous organizations, deploying various components and methods of the guidance in different country contexts. InterAction also identified at least 11 organizations using the GBV PEF in Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, Nigeria, South Sudan, Ukraine, and Uganda.

Learnings generated from these piloting experiences gave path to develop a Companion Guide to the GBV-PEF, the [Gender-Based Violence "Start Where You Are" Guide to Measure and Evaluate GBV Prevention Outcomes in Conflict Settings](#) in March 2024. The Companion Guide provides organizations with a self-assessment to determine where to start and options to navigate

proven barriers related to GBV risk analysis, project design, and innovation in monitoring and evaluation.

INTERIM REVIEW OF THE GBV PEF PILOT PHASE

In March 2024, InterAction commissioned an independent consultant to conduct an Interim Review of the Piloting Phase of the GBV PEF. This paper covers the key findings and recommendations emerging from the Interim Review.

FINDINGS

Findings from the Piloting Phase Interim Review were derived from participatory and qualitative data collection methods. A diverse range of GBV PEF stakeholders, including agencies and organizations piloting the framework, InterAction staff, and members of the GBV PEF Advisory Committee, informed the findings of this review. Below, emergent findings were organized into three central themes:

1. Relevance

Respondents agreed that the GBV-PEF addresses a critical resource gap for reducing GBV risks and measuring GBV prevention outcomes. InterAction was viewed as the ideal leader in developing this framework given its credibility and history in promoting outcome-oriented ways of programming. While the concepts and tools are seen as relevant across various sectors, the attention to a GBV-specific focus is valued as programming for GBV prevention outcomes is lacking in the GBV field. Nonetheless, concerns were raised about the GBV-PEF's alignment with existing GBV frameworks and standards, as well as the feasibility of implementing its methods in emergency contexts.

While more work can be done to better align the GBV PEF, the study found that many respondents viewed the GBV PEF as one of the few technical resources that provides concrete guidance on how to measure prevention and behavior change outcomes. This is a breakthrough in GBV prevention programming, as donors often encourage organizations to utilize the traditional quantitative data collection methods and output-level measures in preventive programming.

“The PEF differs as a resource because it really digs into those questions of the counterfactual—how do you track progress on prevention—and demystifies it.”

- Review Interviewee

Respondents saw a value-add in demonstrating the GBV PEF's synergies with global standard policies such as the widely accepted [Guidelines for Integrating GBV Interventions into Humanitarian Action](#) (GBV Guidelines), developed by the GBV Area of Responsibility, and the [Inter-Agency GBV Minimum Standards for GBV in Emergencies Programming](#). Additionally, some respondents raised concerns about the language derived by the GBV PEF from the Risk Analysis Framework. While widely accepted within the broader protection community, GBV actors are less familiar with or unaware of the utility of the risk equation in analysis and measurement for

GBV prevention outcomes. Therefore, the GBV PEF's complementarity with existing GBV frameworks can be more explicitly articulated by the utilization of widely accepted GBV language and consistent references to resources.

From a leadership perspective, InterAction's unique positionality within the humanitarian ecosystem, sitting between donors and implementers, offered a comparative advantage in developing the guidance. Respondents expressed their perception of InterAction as a thought leader committed to promoting good practices and outcome-oriented ways of programming. Reflecting this role, InterAction disseminated the GBV PEF as a public good, transcending institutional captures that other branded resources are typically restricted by.

InterAction's unique position between donors and practitioners was viewed as an enabling factor, and the GBV PEF Advisory Committee's contribution to its development and dissemination ensured a space for meaningful engagement to overcome barriers.

“There was value in the joint learning and collaboration between two very different technical areas.” - Interviewee

2. Content

The GBV PEF offers a clear presentation of new concepts and methods through a modular structure; however, practitioners were generally unable to pilot the entire framework without access to field-friendly off-the-shelf tools and guides. Few organizations piloted all sections of the GBV PEF, though progress was made in helping practitioners to start thinking in outcome-oriented ways in their GBV Prevention programming.

Respondents noted that the GBV PEF provides a sequential approach to linking each module, resulting in effective outcome measurement. The structure was valued for logically connecting methods and considerations and providing a way for robust evidence generation. Nonetheless, each section can be read independently and makes navigating specific elements for measurement, evidence, and learning (MEL) colleagues more seamless. Being 90 pages, some respondents initially felt the resource to be cumbersome and intimidating. Additionally, publishing the GBV PEF into its modular setup may help make it less overwhelming in terms of size but could result in users leaving out the foundational aspects of risk analysis during the onset of program design. It will be important to include the foundational components at the beginning of each module.

“[The risk analysis process] is a simple way to recognize the knowledge from our local colleagues.” – Interviewee

“We wanted to encourage people to use these methods by saying that they are simple, but in fact, we know that most of them aren't.” - Interviewee

The GBV PEF is a conceptual framework for organizations to internalize outcome-oriented measurement of GBV prevention programming and risk reduction. This posed barriers for practitioners who need access to programming-specific tools and resources. InterAction has made progress in filling this gap through its publication of the [“GBV PEF ‘Start Where You Are’ Guide”](#)

as well as developing additional tools and holding on-line workshops on [Outcome Harvesting](#), [Proxy Indicators](#), and Casual Pathways, detailing how teams can implement each method across the four modules.

“[The GBV PEF] still doesn’t bridge that gap of operationalizing the framework.” – Interviewee

Respondents of the review stated that the GBV PEF promoted community participation and engagement, inspiring organizations to shift their programming from top-down implementation toward community-led initiatives. This finding illustrates opportunities to promote meaningful community participation in the design, monitoring, and evaluation stages of programming.

Moreover, local actors appreciated InterAction’s targeted commitment to ensure accessibility and usability of the GBV PEF through continuous bilateral technical support that was outside of standard global systems and networks. However, the study found that the bilateral technical support is difficult to scale. This approach required a substantial amount of time and resources.

“This type of bilateral support wasn’t scalable, especially since what was most useful to them was individualized coaching” – Former InterAction Staff Member

3. Uptake

InterAction took a mixed-methodology approach to disseminating the GBV PEF to practitioners, technical experts, and donors. The approach included a short online promotional [video](#), online workshops on the methods introduced within the GBV PEF, direct bilateral technical assistance, the formation of a Community of Practice (CoP), and tailored activities to engage local NGOs more effectively. The diverse approach yielded varied success outcomes and learning opportunities to further strengthen dissemination and utilization efforts for the GBV PEF.

Institutional barriers pertaining to organizational culture and technical support capacity, and external restraints, such as donors’ requirements of quantitative indicators in program effectiveness, were salient factors in inhibiting the institutional shift in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that would bring about outcome-oriented program design and measurement. An obstacle many organizations faced was the reliance on preexisting output-level activities and taking target-driven measures. Additionally, teams were accustomed to designing activities based on broad theories and global programs rather than contextualized solutions.

“We don’t yet have the resources to spark that creativity and integrate the PEF into the work of our networks.” - Interviewee

The online CoP for the GBV PEF hosted virtual sessions and discussion boards to facilitate peer learning amongst various organizations piloting the framework. The CoP identified a need to produce advanced case examples and expand membership engagement to gather more learning opportunities. As a result, InterAction published three case examples from the [Danish Refugee Council](#), [International Committee of the Red Cross](#), and [Equal Access International](#), displaying these organizations’ detailed experience when deploying methods from the GBV PEF.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE INTERIM ASSESSMENT

InterAction's independent Interim Review analyzed the emerging findings to identify areas to strengthen. It also aimed to capture direct recommendations from respondents, intending to guide InterAction in refining the GBV PEF to better meet practitioners' needs while maintaining its outcome-oriented approach and recognizing its essential role in the GBV sector. The following recommendations to strengthen the GBV PEF emerged from this review:



Demonstrate Complementarity with Existing GBV Frameworks:

InterAction should align the GBV PEF with accepted GBV language and standards, explicitly referencing the GBV Guidelines, Minimum Standards, and other sectoral resources. This course of action will help distinguish the GBV PEF as a critical tool that supports GBV actors in persuasively telling their stories while aligning with standard sectoral guidance.



Refine Methods for Implementation in Acute Crisis Contexts:

InterAction should refine the language in the GBV PEF to minimize theoretical descriptions and focus on action-oriented explanations and scenarios. This will clearly demonstrate the applicability and integration of the methods to activities often undertaken by GBV actors in acute crisis contexts.



Provide Access to Companion Guides and Tools:

InterAction should map and link existing handbooks and tools within the GBV PEF or develop new practitioner-centered toolkits and manuals where resources do not yet exist. In addition, expanding InterAction's webpage for the GBV PEF to include more outcome-oriented tools will make the application of the GBV PEF more accessible to users.

UPTAKE STRATEGIES

THE INTERIM REPORT IDENTIFIED THREE AREAS OF UPTAKE IN MOVING GBV PEF AND OUTCOME-ORIENTED GBV PREVENTION PROGRAMMING FORWARD:

1. Demonstrate Proof of Concept:

InterAction should continue to partner with organizations to test both individual methods in the GBV PEF and the full approach, especially in acute crisis contexts. InterAction should continue to produce and disseminate case studies that articulate gaps and implementation steps and produce benefits by building confidence among practitioners and donors.

2. Balance Top-Down and Bottom-Up Efforts:

InterAction should promote the uptake of the GBV PEF on an institutional level across the wider sector, including potential engagement with the GBV AoR. Additionally, by recognizing the value of connecting with local organizations, InterAction should develop tailored resources and forums to enable their engagements.

3. Advocate for Recognition of the GBV PEF as a Core Standard:

There is interest among a variety of GBV and humanitarian actors to see outcome-oriented approaches adopted more broadly by the GBV community. InterAction should leverage its credibility to advocate for the collective recognition of the GBV PEF as a fundamental set of norms within the sector.

CONTACT US

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